

PONTIUS PILATE'S INTERVIEW WITH CHRIST.

Is This the Long Lost Report of Pilate Which Reveals the Astonishing Fact That the Saviour's Crucifixion Would Have Been Prevented Had the Roman Reinforcements Arrived One Day Sooner?

FROM MONKACZY'S FAMOUS PAINTING "CHRIST BEFORE PILATE."

THE WORDS OF THE SAVIOUR IN PILATE'S INTERVIEW, AS GIVEN IN THE ROMAN COMMANDER'S REPORT.

Jesus, said I to him at last—and my tongue faltered—Jesus of Nazareth, I have granted you for the last three years ample freedom of speech; nor do I regret it.

However, I must not conceal from you the fact that your discourses have raised up against you powerful and inveterate enemies. Neither is this surprising. My request—I do not say my order—is, that you be more circumspect in the future, and more tender in arousing the pride of your enemies, lest they raise against you the stupid populace, and compel me to employ the instruments of justice.

The Nazarene calmly replied:

"Prince of the earth, your words proceed not from true wisdom. I say to the torrent, stop in the midst of the mountain home! because it will uproot the trees of the valley. The torrent will answer you that it must obey the law of the Creator. God alone knows whither flows the torrent. Verily I say unto you, before the Rose of Sharon blossoms the blood of the Just shall be spilt."

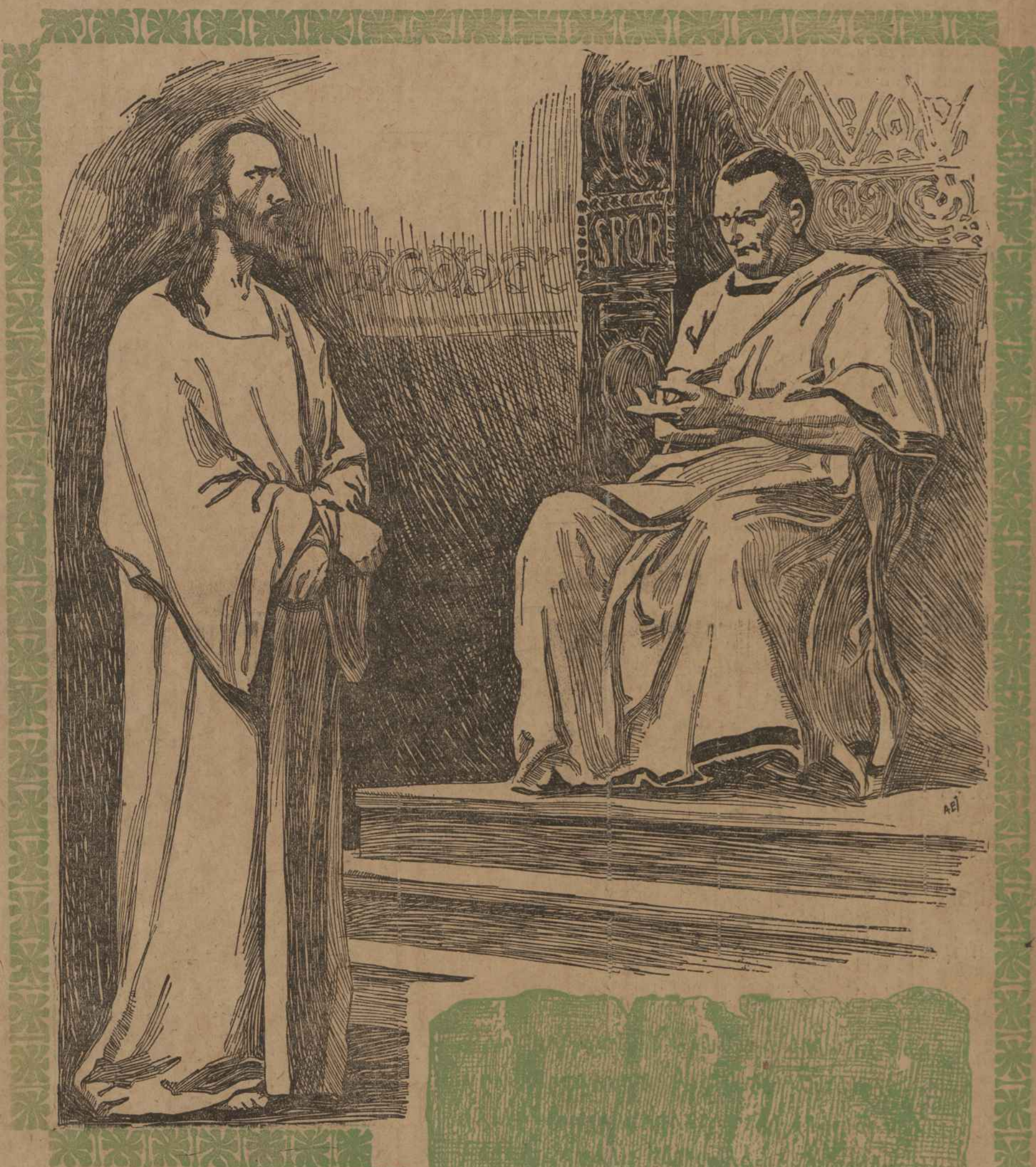
Your blood shall not be spilt, replied I, you are more precious, in my estimation, on account of your wisdom, than all the turbulent and proud Pharisees, who have the freedom granted them by the Romans, and some regard Christ and consider our country inferior to them. I will protect you against them. My father's servants shall guard you as an eagle.

Jesus, then, bowed his head, and said, with a serene and a divine smile:

"When the day shall have come, there will be no asylum for the Son of Man, neither in the earth, nor under the earth. The asylum of the Just is there—pointing to the heavens. That which is written in the books of the prophets must be accomplished."

Young man, answered I, kindly, you oblige me to convert my earnestness into an order. The safety of the province, which has been confided to my care, requires it. You must observe more moderation in your discourses. Do not infringe. My orders you know. May happiness attend you. Farewell.

"Prince of the earth," replied Jesus, "I came not to bring war into the world, but peace, love and charity. I was born the same day on which Augustus Caesar gave peace to the Roman world. Persecution proceeds not from me. I expect it from others, and will meet it in obedience to the will of my Father, Who has shown me the way. Restrain, therefore, your worldly prudence. It is not in your power to arrest the victim at the foot of the Altar of expiation."



TERTULLIAN, the great Christian historian, who lived two hundred years after Christ, says in Book V. of his Apologia: "Peter persuaded Tiberius to place the report of Pilate in the Royal Archives, where it was preserved." Biblical scholars have for centuries searched for this report. The Rev. Dr. W. D. Mahan, an English clergyman and paleographer, has brought to light an ancient Latin manuscript in the library of the Vatican at Rome, which purports to be the missing document. If the Rev. Dr. Mahan proves to be right it is the most marvellously interesting discovery in many centuries. It reveals the astonishing fact that the Saviour would not have been crucified if Pontius Pilate had had enough soldiers to subdue the Jewish mob—if, in fact, the reinforcements of the Roman commander that arrived the very next day had come one day sooner, Pilate would have rescued the Saviour and prevented the crucifixion. Pilate, in his report of the disturbances in the provinces of Judea, tells his emperor, Tiberius Caesar, of a private personal interview he had with

Christ, which gives a new and entrancing vision of the Saviour in the presence of the Roman Governor. The report of Pilate is given in full on the next page, and is, indeed, if authentic, "the most marvellous and extraordinary discovery of years," as Cardinal Gibbons declares. The Journal is unable to prove the authenticity of the document until it has passed under the long and close scrutiny of the antiquarian experts. But there are many reasons why this manuscript may be genuine. That Pontius Pilate wrote such a report is proved by references to it by the early historians who saw it. It is definitely mentioned by Tertullian, the historian of the second century. Eusebius speaks of it and, Justin Martyr cites a passage from it. And Lipsius and Tischendorf, the most distinguished modern experts, believe such a document must have existed. If the report of Pilate were to be discovered anywhere to-day there is no more likely place than the library of the Vatican. It is well known to all scholars that thousands and thousands of unread and unknown treasures lie hidden in the archives of the Pope's library.



FAC-SIMILE OF THE OLD LATIN PARCHMENT. CARDINAL GIBBONS SAYS:

The discovery of this manuscript, of which the Journal possesses a translation, has not been previously brought to my notice. It is an important discovery from every standpoint.

Although the existence of a letter from Pontius Pilate to Tiberius Caesar has been a point of much controversy, the discovery of any document which purports to be the original of such a letter should excite the keenest interest. To pronounce it genuine would require a long, scholarly investigation. If it were found to be genuine it would be the most marvellous and extraordinary discovery of years, and would be of the utmost importance to the Christian world.

"TO TIBERIUS CAESAR—EMPEROR— report the details as they have occurred, as I should not be surprised if in course of time they may change the destiny of our nation; for it seems of late that the gods have ceased to be pro-

pitious. I am almost ready to say, 'Cursed be the day that I succeeded Valerius Gratus in the government of Judea.' Hall, and ordered a splendid feast to be prepared, to which I invited the Tetrarch of Galilee, with the High Priest and his officers. On my arrival at Jerusalem I took possession of the Judgment At the appointed hour, no guests appeared. This was an insult